



DREAM CHARTER SCHOOL

WELLNESS POLICY





WELLNESS POLICIES ON PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND NUTRITION

PREAMBLE

Dream Charter School is committed to providing a school environment that promote and protect children's health, well-being and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, we will:

- Support all schools in providing opportunities for and encouraging all students to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Ensure that food and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans
- Ensure that school meals provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet their health and nutritional needs while accommodating the religious, ethnic, and cultural food preferences of the student body.
- Ensure that students are provided with clean, sanitary settings and adequate time to eat.
- Participate in available federal school meal programs (including the School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program [including after-school snacks], Summer Food Service Program.
- Provide nutrition education and physical education to foster life-long habits of healthy eating and physical activity. Establish linkages between health education and school meal programs and related community service agencies.
- Dream Charter School is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of Dream Charter School that:
- The school will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing school-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- Qualified child nutrition professionals will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; will accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
- To the maximum extent practicable, Dream Charter School will participate in available federal school meal programs (including the National School Lunch Program).
- Dream Charter School will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and will establish linkages between health education and school meal programs, and with related community services.



To Achieve these policy goals, DREAM will establish the following:

I. DREAM HEALTH & WELLNESS COUNCIL

The DREAM Charter School / Harlem RBI Wellness Council is entrusted to provide the guidance, the tools, and the opportunities our youth, staff, and families need to thrive during their lifetimes. The Wellness Council provides and promotes support for our DREAM / Harlem RBI community's physical, social, emotional health. We seek to facilitate the continual growth in all of these areas for each of our community members.

Wellness Council meets monthly to provide ongoing advice to school leadership regarding all matters related to DREAM's Coordinated School Health Program. Wellness Council membership includes teachers, administrators, social workers, school health and food staff, as well as DREAM families and stakeholders from universities, medical organizations and nutrition programs.

II. NUTRITIONAL QUALITY OF FOODS AND BEVERAGES SOLD AND SERVED ON CAMPUS

School Meals

Meals served through the National School Lunch Program will: • be appealing and attractive to children;

- Be served in clean and pleasant settings;
- Meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations;
- Offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;¹
- Serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk flavored
- Have water available at all meals

Dream Charter School will engage students and parents, through taste- tests of new entrees and surveys, in selecting foods sold through the school meal programs in order to identify new, healthful, and appealing food choices. In addition, Dream Charter School will share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents and students. Such information could be made available on menus, a website, on cafeteria menu boards, placards, or other point-of-purchase materials.

III. MEAL TIMES AND SCHEDULING

Dream Charter School:

- Will provide students with at least 20 minutes to eat after sitting down lunch.;
- Should meal periods at appropriate times, e.g., lunch should be scheduled between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., if possible;
- Should not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;
- Will schedule recess periods prior to lunch (in elementary schools), if possible ;



- Will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks; and
- Should take reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs (e.g., orthodontia or high tooth decay risk).

Qualifications of School Food Service Staff

Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs. At least one person will be certified by the NYC Health Department. As part of the school's responsibility to operate a food service program, we will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in schools. Staff development programs should include appropriate certification and/or training programs for child nutrition directors, school nutrition managers, and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility.

Sharing of Foods and Beverages

Dream Charter School will discourage students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets. No fried vegetable will be offered. Schools are encouraged to source fresh fruits and vegetables from local farmers when practicable.

Beverages

- **Allowed:** water without added caloric sweeteners; fruit and vegetable juices and fruit-based drinks that contain at least 100% fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; unflavored or flavored low-fat or fat-free fluid milk and nutritionally-equivalent nondairy beverages (to be defined by USDA);
- **Not Recommended:** soft drinks containing caloric sweeteners; sports drinks; seltzer water; iced teas; fruit-based drinks that contain less than 50% real fruit juice or that contain additional caloric sweeteners; beverages containing caffeine, excluding low-fat or fat-free chocolate milk (which contain trivial amounts of caffeine).

Foods

- Follow the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast program guidelines and requirements.

Portion Sizes:

- Follow the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast program guidelines and requirements.

Snacks

Snacks served during the school day or in after-school care or enrichment programs will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables



as the primary snacks and water as the primary beverage. Schools will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children's nutritional needs, children's ages, and other considerations. The school will disseminate a list of healthful snack items to teachers, after-school program personnel, and parents.

If eligible, schools that provide snacks through after-school programs will pursue receiving reimbursements through the National School Lunch Program.

Rewards

The school will not use foods or beverages, especially those that do not meet the nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually (above), as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, and will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment.

Celebrations

Schools should limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to no more than one party per class per month. Each party should include no more than one food or beverage that does not meet nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually (above). The district will disseminate a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers. Unless this practice is allowed by a student's individual education plan (IEP).

IV. NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROMOTION AND FOOD MARKETING

Nutrition Education and Promotion

Dream Charter School aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Dream Charter School will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- Is offered at each grade level as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- Is part of not only health education classes, but also classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects;
- Includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally- relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens;
- Promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices;
- Emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);
- Links with school meal programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services;
- Teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing; and • includes training for teachers and other staff.



Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting

For students to receive the nationally-recommended amount of daily physical activity (i.e., at least 60 minutes per day) and for students to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class.

Toward that end:

- Classroom health education will complement physical education by reinforcing the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically-active lifestyle and to reduce time spent on sedentary activities, such as watching television; • opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons; and
- Classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

Communications with Parents

Dream Charter School will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The school will encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet the above nutrition standards for individual foods and beverages. The school will provide parents a list of foods that meet the school's snack standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, rewards, and fundraising activities. In addition, the school will provide opportunities for parents to share their healthy food practices with others in the school community.

Dream Charter School will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during, and after the school day; and support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school. Such supports will include sharing information about physical activity and physical education through a website, newsletter, or other take-home materials, special events, or physical education homework.

Food Marketing in Schools

School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. As such, schools will limit food and beverage marketing to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually (above). School-based marketing of brands promoting predominantly low- nutrition foods and beverages is prohibited. The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products is encouraged.

Examples of marketing techniques include the following: logos and brand names on/in vending machines, books or curricula, textbook covers, school supplies, scoreboards, school structures, and sports equipment; educational incentive programs that provide food as a reward; programs that provide schools with supplies when families buy low-nutrition food products, free samples or coupons; and food sales through fundraising activities.



IV. PHYSICAL ACTIVITY OPPORTUNITIES AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Daily Recess

All students will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which schools should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment. Schools should discourage extended periods (i.e., periods of two or more hours) of inactivity. When activities, such as mandatory school-wide testing, make it necessary for students to remain indoors for long periods of time, schools should give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

Recess is an essential component of DREAM's comprehensive school physical activity program and of the total education experience for elementary and middle school scholars. Recess is an important part of the school day, providing students discretionary time to engage in physical activity that helps them develop healthy bodies and enjoyment of movement. It also allows children the opportunity to practice life skills such as cooperation, taking turns, following rules, sharing, communication, negotiation, problem solving, and conflict resolution. Furthermore, participation in physical activity may improve attention, focus, behavior, and learning in the classroom.

Physical Education—Elementary School

Whole-child education addresses the body, mind and spirit. While physical education addresses the knowledge (cognitive) and social (affective) aspects of the child, its main focus is on physical development and skills (psychomotor). The goal of physical education is to develop physically educated individuals who will be life-long lovers of movement, with the knowledge, skills and confidence to enjoy a lifetime of physical activity. Physical Education is an integral part of DREAM's curriculum. Students are expected to participate in Physical Education when they are in school. Students must have a note from a caregiver or medical professional in order to be excused from Physical Education. Notes should specify what a student may do, as well as what he/she may not do in Physical Education for the duration of the illness or injury. Physical Education may not be withheld as a punishment or used as a time to complete other work. Students must have sneakers to participate in Physical Education. Twice daily, classroom teachers support Physical Education at DREAM, supporting learning experiences with purposeful movement breaks developed with the guidance of the DREAM Physical Education Specialist.

Physical Education—Middle School

Middle school is, for most scholars, a difficult transition out of adolescence. Physical Education for Middle School scholars will focus on bringing the skills focused on in elementary school to life within team sports and cooperative education. Cooperative education is the cornerstone to developing a sense of team. Team is a value of DREAM that will be further explored and developed in Middle School. Teachers reinforce the vocabulary, critical thinking skills, and problem-solving skills necessary to meet the National Physical Education Standards.



Outside Sports

At DREAM we believe all scholars should be exposed to as many opportunities that allow them to develop and showcase their skills in activities not offered in the traditional Physical Education Curriculum. This allows for classes to work together and achieve goals beyond the classroom. DREAM scholars have the opportunity to participate in team sports beyond physical education.

DREAM has several partnerships with sport vendors that include: Rugby, Swimming, Track and Field, Soccer and Tennis. Outside sports are supervised by the classroom teachers and facilitated by expert coaches. This allows the teachers and scholars the opportunity to further develop the value of Team. Athletics—Middle School DREAM is committed to providing each scholar a healthy experience that goes beyond the classroom. Interscholastic sports will be offered during each season to every Middle School scholar. Scholars must maintain a GPA of at least a “B” in order to be eligible to practice and play. Scholars who participate but fall below the a “B” average, are considered on academic probation. Scholars are expected to attend every practice and game but are NOT permitted to participate until they have met the criteria to be reinstated.

Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School

The elementary and middle school will offer extracurricular physical activity programs, such as physical activity clubs or intramural programs. The middle school, as appropriate, will offer interscholastic sports programs. Dream Charter School will offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students, including boys, girls, students with disabilities, and students with special health-care needs. After-school child care and enrichment programs will provide and encourage – verbally and through the provision of space, equipment, and activities – daily periods of moderate to vigorous physical activity for all participants. Physical Activity and Punishment.

Teachers and other school and community personnel will not use physical activity (e.g., running laps, pushups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (e.g., recess, physical education) as punishment, such as a lunch detention or other type of consequence.

V. MONITORING AND POLICY REVIEW

Monitoring

Designated administrative personnel will ensure compliance with established school-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. The principal or designee will ensure compliance with those policies in his/her school and will report on the school’s compliance to their designee.



The school food service staff will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the Principal. Designated administrative personnel will develop a summary report every three years on school-wide compliance with the school's established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies, based on input from schools within the community. That report will be provided to the school board and also distributed to all school health committees, parent/teacher organizations, school principals, and school health services personnel in the school.

Policy Review

The school will conduct a baseline assessment of the existing nutritional and physical activity environment and policies.⁵ Assessments will be repeated every three years to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of that review, the school district will review our nutrition and physical activity policies; provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity; and nutrition and physical education policies and program elements. The district, and individual schools within the district, will, as necessary, revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation.